

OPINION 2259 (Case 3435)***Bagauda* Bergroth, 1903 (Insecta, Heteroptera): usage not conserved and priority maintained for *Pleias* Kirkaldy, 1901**

Abstract. The Commission has ruled that priority is maintained for the generic name *Pleias* Kirkaldy, 1901 a thread-legged assassin bug from Afrotropical and Oriental Regions, 1901, thus it remains the senior synonym of the name *Bagauda* Bergroth, 1903 (type species *Bagauda avidus* Bergroth, 1903).

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; REDUVIIDAE; EMESINAE; *Bagauda*; *Pleias*; *Pleias ritsemae*; thread-legged assassin bug; Afrotropical and Oriental Regions.

Ruling

- (1) The generic name *Bagauda* Bergroth, 1903 has not been given precedence over the name *Pleias* Kirkaldy, 1901 whenever the two are considered to be synonyms.
- (2) No names are placed on Official Lists or Indexes and the issue is left open for subsequent workers to follow the precepts of the Code or to make new proposals to the Commission.

History of Case 3435

An application to conserve the usage of the name *Bagauda* Bergroth, 1903 (type species *Bagauda avidus* Bergroth, 1903) for a genus of thread-legged assassin bug from Afrotropical and Oriental Regions, by giving it precedence over the senior generic name *Pleias* Kirkaldy, 1901 was received from D. Rédei (*Hungarian Natural History Museum, Budapest, Hungary*) on 26 July 2007. After correspondence the case was published in BZN 65: 93–96 (June 2008). The title, abstract and keywords of the case were published on the Commission's website. One comment in support of this case was published in BZN 65: 304 (December 2008).

Decision of the Commission

On 1 June 2009 the members of the Commission were invited to vote on the proposals published in BZN 65: 94 (June 2008). At the close of the voting period on 1 September 2009 the votes were as follows:

Affirmative votes – 13: Brothers, Fautin, Halliday, Harvey, Krell, Papp, Patterson, Rosenberg, Štys, Winston, Yanega, Zhang and Zhou.

Negative votes – 14: Alonso-Zarazaga, Ballerio, Bogutskaya, Bouchet, Grygier, Kojima, Kottelat, Kullander, Lamas, Lim, Minelli, Ng, Pape and van Tol.

Pyle was on leave of absence.

Voting AGAINST, Bouchet said that although Kirkaldy's original description was published in 'Notes from the Leyden Museum', it appeared that nobody examined the holotype in that museum (now Naturalis). He felt that disregard for priority would encourage sloppy work, and application of priority in this case will affect only

a very small body of literature. Also voting AGAINST, Kojima felt that this was a taxonomic matter rather than a nomenclatural issue. Based only on the author's taxonomic decision (that is that *Pleias ritsemae* is congeneric with *Bagauda avidus*), the Commission was asked to use its plenary power to give *Bagauda* precedence over *Pleias*. Kottelat voted AGAINST, with the comment that the application did not explain why the change of the name of a genus including only 18 species threatened stability. The application did not mention what would be the wider impact of the change, besides affecting a few taxonomists who should be able to cope with routine nomenclatural changes resulting from new taxonomic knowledge. Kullander, voting AGAINST, said that the best action is for taxonomists to consistently apply priority as soon as possible to avoid more confusion. Lamas voted AGAINST, saying he also saw no justification in voting against the Principle of Priority for this particular case. Ng voted AGAINST, saying that it is regrettable that the synonymy has only now been found, even though the type is extant in a good museum. He saw no strong reason why the Principle of Priority should not apply as the names concerned are not of a nature that will affect biology that widely. A simple taxonomic change is all that is needed, and after initial uncertainty, the name will be in broad use. He also noted that the oldest name, *Pleias* Kirkaldy, 1901, has been regarded as *incertae sedis* by earlier workers and not missed, so the name has been accepted as present for many years.